

May 20, 2008

Mr. Charles L.A. Terreni
Chief Clerk/ Administrator
South Carolina Public Service Commission
101 Executive Center Drive
Columbia, SC 29210
Re: Docket No. 2007-445-A

Dear Mr. Terreni:

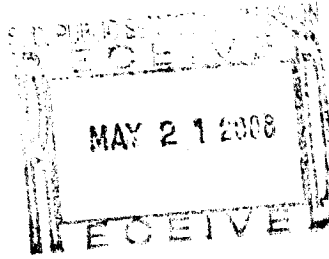
The South Carolina Health Care Association represents over one hundred fifty nursing homes in South Carolina. Our members are required to use the broker transportation system established by the Department of Health and Human Services and, while improving, the system has provided a lower level of service to our residents and many have been subjected to dangerous conditions. The average age of our residents is eighty years old and they are unable to be transported without supervision and many need medical attention. The proposed stretcher van regulations, if approved, would further compromise the medical condition of our most frail, elderly population. The Department of Health and Human Services is supportive because of the potential cost savings without regard for patient safety.

More troubling is the fact that in-state transportation providers have stated that many would go out of business if this regulation were approved. Declining revenues would preclude them from purchasing the vans and emergent transport revenues would not sustain them. If these businesses close, our providers and residents would not be able to access the ambulance resources needed in an emergency such as a hurricane, which would require evacuation. I urge you to look at the negative implications of this regulation and to look at the needs and safety of South Carolinians first and the dollars second. We strongly oppose this regulation and will vigorously oppose it's passage.

Sincerely,

J. Randal Lee
President

South Carolina Health Care Association



JRI/ki

CC: C. Dukes Scott
CC: Jeffrey M. Nelson
CC: Emma Forkner